

ARTICLE APPEARED
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8 May 1984**Legality at Issue****FBI Probing Libyan Aid to Black Activists**By John M. Goshko
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The FBI is investigating whether Libyan leader Muammar Qaddafi's radical government has tried to influence American domestic affairs illegally by giving money and other assistance to some black community activists and black nationalist groups in this country, according to U.S. government officials.

The officials, who declined to be identified, said the investigation grew out of close FBI surveillance of Libya's mission to the U.N. in New York.

The surveillance began in 1981, they said, after U.S. security officials received reports of a possible Libyan-inspired assassination plot against the United States' ambassador to the United Nations, Jeane J. Kirkpatrick. Libya's U.N. mission was headed until early last month by Ali Treiki, who is now Qaddafi's foreign minister.

The FBI has evidence from interceptions of communications and observations of Treiki's contacts with Americans that he was using the U.N. mission to pass money to black activists who exhibited sympathy for Libya's radical goals for Third World revolutionary movements, the officials said.

However, the officials did not identify American individuals or organizations that received money from Libya.

It is permissible and not uncommon for foreign governments to donate money to American organizations if the funds are given openly for educational, cultural or philanthropic purposes. However, the Foreign Agents Registration Act requires individuals or groups receiving money from a foreign government to register with the Justice Department if the funds are used to influence U.S. policy for the benefit of the donating nation.

Depending on the nature of the violation, failure to register could be prosecuted either as a felony or a civil offense.

Robert W. Thabit, a New York attorney who is the legal adviser to Libya's U.N. mission, said yesterday that Libyan officials have assured him that their representatives have "no intention of violating the laws of the United States or of trying to affect internal domestic policies."

Thabit added that Treiki, before his return home April 4, had contacts with "people of all classes and all colors and religions." Because of Libya's support for Palestinians in the Middle East and for blacks in

South Africa, Thabit said, American blacks have visited the U.N. mission to thank Treiki for his country's stands.

Attorneys for the Libyans also said that the Qaddafi government has donated money to Islamic centers in various parts of the United States and that there is nothing inappropriate about a Moslem country helping coreligionists.

The U.S. officials were unable to specify whether the information collected by the FBI is sufficient for the Justice Department to seek indictments against any Americans or for the State Department to charge Libya with abusing its U.N. personnel's diplomatic immunity. But they said the probe had increased in intensity in recent months.

They said details of the probe have been restricted to a small number of officials in the FBI and the Justice and State departments. But they added that Kirkpatrick, Secretary of State George P. Shultz, CIA Director William J. Casey and the

White House have been kept informed of its progress.

The inquiry is regarded as extremely sensitive because of both its international and domestic implications, according to the officials. They said the administration appears to be moving very cautiously out of concern that public accusations without ironclad proof might subject President Reagan to charges that his administration is increasing black-white tensions for partisan purposes.

They also cited the damage done to the FBI's reputation by past revelations of its surveillance and harassment of the late Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and other black civil rights leaders during the 1960s.

The investigation is being conducted against a background of international pressure by the Reagan administration for concerted action by the United States and other western countries to force the Qaddafi government to stop sponsoring international terrorism.

The United States asked all Americans to leave Libya in December, 1981, following still unconfirmed reports that Qaddafi had dispatched a "hit squad" to assassinate Reagan and other senior U.S. officials. As a result of reports of threats against her, officials said, Kirkpatrick has had a 24-hour guard since March 31, 1981.

Subsequently, the officials said, the FBI developed information, primarily through telephone wiretaps, of Libyan contacts with what the officials described as "black separatist" and "black activist" groups in New York and elsewhere in the United States.

According to the officials, the apparent Libyan aim was to enlist the aid of these groups in unspecified ways to help defeat Reagan's bid for reelection. One official, referring to "transcripts" he had seen, said they indicated a Libyan belief that every-

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2,

thing possible must be done to defeat Reagan because, in Libya's view, he represents a major danger to world peace and security.

A delegation of Americans, including representatives of some black nationalist organizations, attended a Libyan government-sponsored conference in Libya in April, 1983.

Libyan attorney Thabit also noted that a group of residents of Englewood, N.J., led by a black minister, publicly supported Treiki during a controversy last year about Treiki's purchase of a mansion in that city.

There was no indication yesterday that these incidents were among the activities under FBI investigation.

The Rev. Walter S. Taylor, minister of a United Methodist Church in Englewood and publisher of the Torch Bearer, a weekly newspaper, said in a telephone interview yesterday that he helped organize citizen opposition to the city of Englewood's effort to deny tax-exempt status for the mansion purchased by Treiki.

Taylor, a former mayor of Englewood, said he sponsored a meeting at his church, which Treiki attended, supporting the Libyan position and also published stories in his newspaper about the controversy.

Taylor said the Libyan government later gave him a "small donation" around \$5,000, which he used to help defray costs of putting out his newspaper.

Preston Wilcox, who runs AFRAM, a black information service in Harlem, said yesterday that he attended the 1983 conference in Libya with Akbar Muhammad, formerly known as Larry X, who is a top aide to Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan. Wilcox said representatives of the All African Peoples Revolutionary Party, the Republic of New Africa and the American Indian Movement also attended.

Staff writer Mary Thornton contributed to this report.